



Alonzo Fulgham Begins One Year Post as USAID/ Afghanistan Mission Director

On July 29, Alonzo Fulgham arrived in Kabul to begin his one-year post as USAID Mission Director for Afghanistan. A swearing-in ceremony was held in late June in Washington, DC. As Mission Director, Fulgham will focus on rebuilding infrastructure, developing agriculture, improving education and healthcare, and reconstituting basic governance. USAID's FY05 budget for Afghanistan is almost \$1.5 billion. The Afghanistan reconstruction program is second only to Iraq in budget and complexity.



Alonzo Fulgham speaks during his swearing-in ceremony in Washington.

Ministry of Education and USAID Collaborate to Deliver Needed Textbooks to Bamiyan

As part of its comprehensive education program, USAID has printed and distributed 35.7 million textbooks for grades 1-12 since 2002. An additional 6.2 million have been printed and are ready for distribution. However, the Afghan government often receives specific and unexpected requests from its constituents. The following collaborative effort demonstrates USAID's agility and dedication in helping the central government respond to provincial requests.

During a visit to Bamiyan in late July, Afghan President Karzai met with students who informed him that they were in need of more 8th and 9th grade textbooks. The president promised the students that they would have the additional textbooks within 10 days. Upon return to Kabul, the President informed the Minister of Education. USAID and the Ministry of Education (MOE) collaborated to ensure that the students' needs were met within the deadline. At the time of the request, USAID's printers had all the subjects needed for 9th grade. Another printer had printed 4 subjects for 8th grade. He agreed to immediately switch to print the remaining subjects needed for 8th grade. The partial set of 8th grade and all of the 9th grade textbooks were delivered to the MOE on August 2 and the remaining 8th grade textbooks will be ready by August 8 and will then be delivered to Bamiyan. The Minister was extremely appreciative of USAID's ability to respond so quickly.



USAID's education program collaborated with the Ministry of Education to deliver needed textbooks to Bamiyan. From left to right are USAID staff Perry Boomshine and Sara Amiryar; then Mohammad Noor Qarqeen, Minister of Education and Dr. Ghaznowi, Deputy Minister of Education.

Increasing Capacity of Healthcare Professionals

To improve the capacity of health providers, USAID focuses on designing and delivering training and professional development courses. In June, a total of 571 doctors, nurses and midwives completed refresher training courses in newborn care, family planning, infectious disease and antenatal/postnatal care. USAID delivered Essential Obstetric Care (EOC) courses at Malalai Hospital, Kabul and Mazar-i Sharif Civil Hospital to update the knowledge and standardize the skills of 30 participants in key safe motherhood practices according to national clinical standards. In addition, a two-day community mapping refresher training course was conducted in Herat province for 30 staff from Herat and Faryab provinces.



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Fiscal Technical Assistance

Capacity Building

In July 2005, USAID delivered eight different training seminars for Ministry of Finance personnel. Training topics included: value-added tax, business receipt tax, income tax coverage, income tax liability, and fixed/presumptive taxes. Since the beginning of 2005, USAID has facilitated training for approximately 833 Ministry of Finance staff members by conducting 45 different seminars). In addition, comparisons between "pre" and "post" examinations illustrate a 25% increase in staff comprehension.

Domestic Revenue Generation

Afghanistan's Ministry of Finance released total domestic revenue totals for the first 3 months of Afghan calendar year 1384. The total is now \$77.16 million, a 40% increase from the same period last year (Afghan year 1383).

Of the \$77.16 million, customs operations represent 53% of the total figure, with \$41.45 million collected within the initial 3-month period. Taxes account for 10% of total domestic revenue, with \$7.7 million collected so far. This shows considerable progress from last year (1383) and is promising for the remainder of the year.

Security Incidents

Number of Hostile Attacks: During this reporting period, there were eleven hostile attacks; resulting in two persons killed, four injured and two kidnapped.

Recent Incidents: Acts of violence and intimidation against those associated with the Election process continue. On August 10, an IED explosion took place in the Joint Election Management body (JEMB) Provincial Office in Logar Province. The IED was hidden in the engine compartment of a Russian Jeep belonging to the ANP. There were no casualties reported, no secondary explosions and two other vehicles were destroyed in the ensuing fire.

